A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Saturday, October 18. 1707.

ENquiring in our laſt about the next Buſineſs which lies before us, which relates to War, *viz.* MONEY; I came to diſcourſe a thing, which hitherto ſeems to be only the Effect of common Fame, and may have ſomething in it, or nothing in it, as it may happen; I mean the Affair of *Madagaſcar*.

That *Madagaſcar* has for a few Years paſt been a Receptacle of Pyrates, of all Nations, moſt People have heard, and long Tales we have had told us of their Wealth, and the immenſe Treaſure they have heap'd together there, by their Pyracy, on thoſe Parts of the World, particularly in the Read Sea, the Gulph of *Perſia*, and all thoſe Parts, of which, if one half be true, *Madagaſcar* may in Time come to be terrible to all that Part of the World.

We are told, whether true or falſe, I do not determine; that ſome of the richeſt of theſe Pyrates, who are *Engliſh*, have made Propoſals, that if they may have their Pardon, they will return to their own Country, live quietly at home, and ceaſing their old roving Trade, become honeſt Freeholders, as others of our *Weſt-India* Pyrates, *Merchants I ſhould have ſaid*, have done before them. I hope, the Gentlemen won't be offended, that by a Slip, I had like to have given ſome of them their true Names; I am not about to point them out, nor paint them out, it would make a ſad Chaſm on the *Exchange* of *London*, if all the Pyrates ſhould be taken away from among the Merchants there, whether we be underſtood to ſpeak of your Litteral or Allegorical Pyrates; whether I ſhould mean the Clandeſtine

Nine Trade Pyrates, who pyrate upon fair Trade at home; the Custom-stealing Pyrates, who pyrate upon the Government; the Owling Pyrates, who rob the Manufactures; the privateering Pyrates, who rob by Law; and because *A* the *French* Man of St. *Maloes* rob'd them, rob *B* of *Marsellies*, that never did them any Hurt; whether we mean the cheating Pyrate, that robs at home, or the Factor Pyrate, that robs abroad, of all Sorts, from the *Madagascar* Man to the *Buchaneer*——If all these should be taken off of the *Exchange*, and rendezvous'd, might we not say of them, as once of the Coward Captains of the Fleet.

Bless Us, what Crowding there'd be when they meet!

Now, Gentlemen, all these Sorts of People when they get Estates in *Jamaica* or *Barbadoes*, or any of our Colonies or Factories abroad, when they have got Estates, they seek to come home and spend them; in order to this, they soon lay off the Out-side, adjourn the Thief, and putting the Badge of Gravity on, they come home for great Merchants, and live unquestion'd. And why should you deny this, Gentlemen, to your Brethren of *Madagascar*, if they are really willing to reform the Practice, and turn sober?

But over and above all this, they tell us now, that these honest Pyrates at *Madagascar* offer a great Sum of Money for their Pardon, and for Liberty to come Home and reform their Lives; nay, Gentlemen, this is still farther, for *first* we are bound, you know, to receive Penitents, and encourage them; but this Article of Money is a very great Matter to introduce us to grant them Pardon. But how much will they give? Give, say some, they talk of 3 or 4 Millions. Prosperous Villains! Who would not be a Thief at that Price, that could live in all Manner of Luxury and Wealth for a Time, and then having gotten Money enough to buy his Pardon, turn honest Fellow again——Now, tho' if the Truth were examin'd, this Sum may not amount to half the Money; nay, if it were to Half a Quarter, 'tis a Prodigy; yet what shall we say, where these Pyracies may in Time end, and how in Time they may come to be such fortunate Thieves, as to form a Nation, a State, at War with all the World, they could, like true *Ismaelites*, turn their Hand against every Man, and every Man's Hand against them, and they be thus Great and Wealthy—What will become of Trade, and what of such Nations as we, who have no Subsistence but by Commerce; upon these Accounts a *Delenda* is justly written upon them by the rest of *Europe*; if the Words are in their Senses, they must be rooted out of that Place, *that I lay down as as a Principle.*

I believe, all Men agree with me in this thing; if a Nest of Pyrates, a Den of Thieves, come to plant themselves in a Place so situated as that, and so advantageous for all Manner of Mischief to the World; it is the Concern of all the Trading Part of the World to pull them down, and *that right early*, before they grow too big for them—— Just thus began the *Roman* Empire—Thus in Manner, I mean, *tho' not just in the same Kind*; A Parcel of roving *Africans* that had no Habitation, no Refuge, and fixing themselves in *Latium*, they encourag'd all the loose People in the World to join with them, all the Vagabonds, like *David* at *Hackelah*, so it is here.

Now this Receptacle of Rogues is become potent and rich, and they are willing, *as they say, for I do not affirm it*, to lay down the thieving Trade, at least as a Profession, and they will give a great Part of their ill gotten Wealth, say they, for their Pardon; and the Question before us is, shall we take it?

O scandalous! Says the Objector; 'tis dishonourable to the Nation, 'tis an Encouragement to Thieves, and gives a Proclamation to Mankind, that when the greatest Rogues in the World have run a Length in all Manner of Mischief, rob'd, plunder'd and murther'd, perhaps some of all the Nations in the World, they may buy their Pardon with a Part of their Plunder, and the Spoils of the Innocent shall atone for the Crimes of the Guilty; and this is now the Dispute before us——

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This makes good, ſay they, what you told us in your laſt, of the Power of Money, that it opens Jails, buys Life, and bribes the Gallows. Pardon ſuch a Gang of Villains! *Say they*, no Body ought to dye for Robbery, after they are pardon'd; beſides 'tis ſelling Vengeance, and approving all the Blood they have ſhed; 'tis a mixing the ſtollen Goods of others with our own, and fathering all the Crime upon the Nation; it is a moſt ſcandalous Piece of Meanneſs, and proſtituting general Juſtice to the Bribe of a Sum of Money. O 'tis horrid! 'Tis abominable, it cannot be done, it muſt not be ſuffer'd, it ſhould not be thought on, or ſo much as nam'd among us, leaſt it leave a Reproach upon our Nation to Poſterity, and form a Precedent for other Nations to imitate!

Hold, hold, Gentlemen, not ſo faſt—Will you have a little Patience, and let us go back to the Beginning of this Affair? I have own'd, as much as can be deſir'd of me, that they ought to be rooted out of the Place upon any Terms, ay, and of the Earth too, if poſſible—And upon this very Foundation, which you will allow, is proved the Lawfulneſs and Honour of doing the other, which you will not allow.

They are to be routed off of the Place, *that is the firſt thing*, and every Body joyns in that—Well, Gentlemen, how will you do that? By Force you cannot do it, it is eaſie to demonſtrate, you cannot; you may ſeparate them, and make them fly, tho' you muſt have a very good Force to do that too; but you muſt plant a Colony there, poſſeſs the Iſland, which is bigger than our three Kingdoms, *that were*; then you muſt maintain Men of War always there, to cruiſe and awe them, *or if not*, wherever you drive them, they will return, or ſtill ſupport their wicked Practice of Piracy.

Now in Caſes of Rebellions and dangerous Inſurrections, when whole Countries have been ravaged, and the People often murthered, and intollerable Miſchiefs executed; what has been more frequent, than for the Princes of thoſe Countries, firſt to publiſh Indemnities and Pardons to them, on Condition of laying down their Arms; we need not go far for Inſtances of this Kind. Now the Diſtance of Place, Difficulty of ſending, Hazard of Troops, Ships, and Neceſſaries, to reduce thoſe Fellows, are powerful Arguments to induce the Government to give them an Indemnity, upon Condition of turning to their Duty, and giving over ſo pernicious a Trade—Nor can this be call'd a Conniving at Blood, ſtopping the Courſe of Juſtice, or letting Villanies go unpuniſh'd—Puniſhment of Crime has always two Ends in it, I mean, Legal Ends in it; *Firſt*, The Vengeance of GOD and the Country, upon the Crime it ſelf, which I call ſimply the *Puniſhment*. *Secondly*, The Care of the Government for its own Peace, and this I call *Prevention*.

'Tis to be ſuppoſed, the Prince cannot execute the firſt Part, the Rebel being ſtrong and inſolent; or he cannot without great Hazard: His Buſineſs then is, if poſſible, to put an End to the Miſchief, and prevent its running on to an extravagant Height, prevent the Effuſion of Blood, and maintain the Peace of his Country——Juſt thus it is here; it were very juſtifiable for the Government of *Britain* to publiſh an Indemnity to theſe Thieves, and by all fair, and mild, merciful Methods bring them off from that wicked Place and Practice, that the Neck of ſo abominable a Project may be broken; that ſuch a Neſt of Deſperadoes may be rooted out, before they grow too ſtrong, and the Diſeaſe incurable; before it grow a common Practice to run away with Ships, rob, plunder and deſtroy, and run thither for Shelter. If all the Banditti, the Murtherers and Vagabonds of *Europe*, ſhould once fix this Place in their Eye, who knows how ſtrong it may grow, 'tis therefore very well worth noticing, and well worth unhinging this Settlement, the beſt and cheapeſt Way poſſible, before it be too late.

I come now to the Money Point; If it be lawful, *nay neceſſary*, to draw them off by Indemnity and Remiſſion, it cannot be unlawful to take their offer'd Wealth, as the Purchaſe of what, if they did not offer Money for it, we would and might lawfully give them without it.

But I'll put the Caſe farther; Suppoſe a Fleet were fitted out to reduce theſe wretched Colonies of Thieves, and ſuppoſe upon the Expedition they were ſubdued, entirely reduc'd, ſome kill'd in Fight, and the reſt,

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as no doubt they deserv'd, oblig'd with the Favour of the Gallows——Well, what would you do with the Wealth they have there? Would you take it away, and bring it home to pay for the Charges of the Expedition, or to help making another against their Brother Pyrates, the *French*? Or would you set up a Court of Claims there, and make Proclamation, that all the People of every Nation, that had loft any thing, should have their Goods again? Or would you leave it all behind you, only because it was ill-gotten Stuff? One of the Three you must do; the *Last* would be no Justice, because you would take it only from the Thieves, and leave it to the *Barbarians*, who neither had Claim to it, nor knew what to do with it. *The Second* would be to no Purpose, because the Claimants could neither make out their Properties, the Money having no Ear-Mark, nor could they meet together to make an Average, or could they ever be known, or the Sums adjusted. The first no doubt you might lawfully do, it being the Goods of Robbers, which by the Law of Nations is forfeited to Justice; and the Losers have Justice in that the Mischief is prevented for the future; as a Man rob'd on the High-way, if the Thief be hang'd, he cannot claim of the Country to pay his Loss.

And thus I think, I have cleared up the Case; for if it be lawful to admit them to Pardon, and if it be lawful to take what they have by Force, it must be lawful to take it as a Condition of their Surrender, as a Condition of admitting them to come in—And all this, supposing they cannot easily, or without Hazard or Blood, be otherwise reduc'd—Let them offer their ill-gotten Money, then I am clear, it will be well gotten Money to us; I wish the Parliament had it, and their Ways and Means would be finely mended for this Session, which otherwise I doubt will be difficult enough.

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